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CANADA AGRICULTURE

Levels of Living of Farm  
Families In Representative  
Rural Areas of Western  
Canada

by F.M. Edwards

*V. J. Macdonald*

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LEVELS OF LIVING OF FARM FAMILIES

IN REPRESENTATIVE RURAL AREAS

OF WESTERN CANADA

F. M. Edwards, H. E. Elliott, and H. M. Turnbull

Marketing Service, Economics Division

Dominion Department of Agriculture

in co-operation with

The Universities of Alberta and Saskatchewan

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LEVELS OF LIVING OF FARM FAMILIES IN REPRESENTATIVE RURAL AREAS  
OF WESTERN CANADA

F. M. Edwards, H. E. Elliott, and H. M. Turnbull <sup>1/</sup>

INTRODUCTION

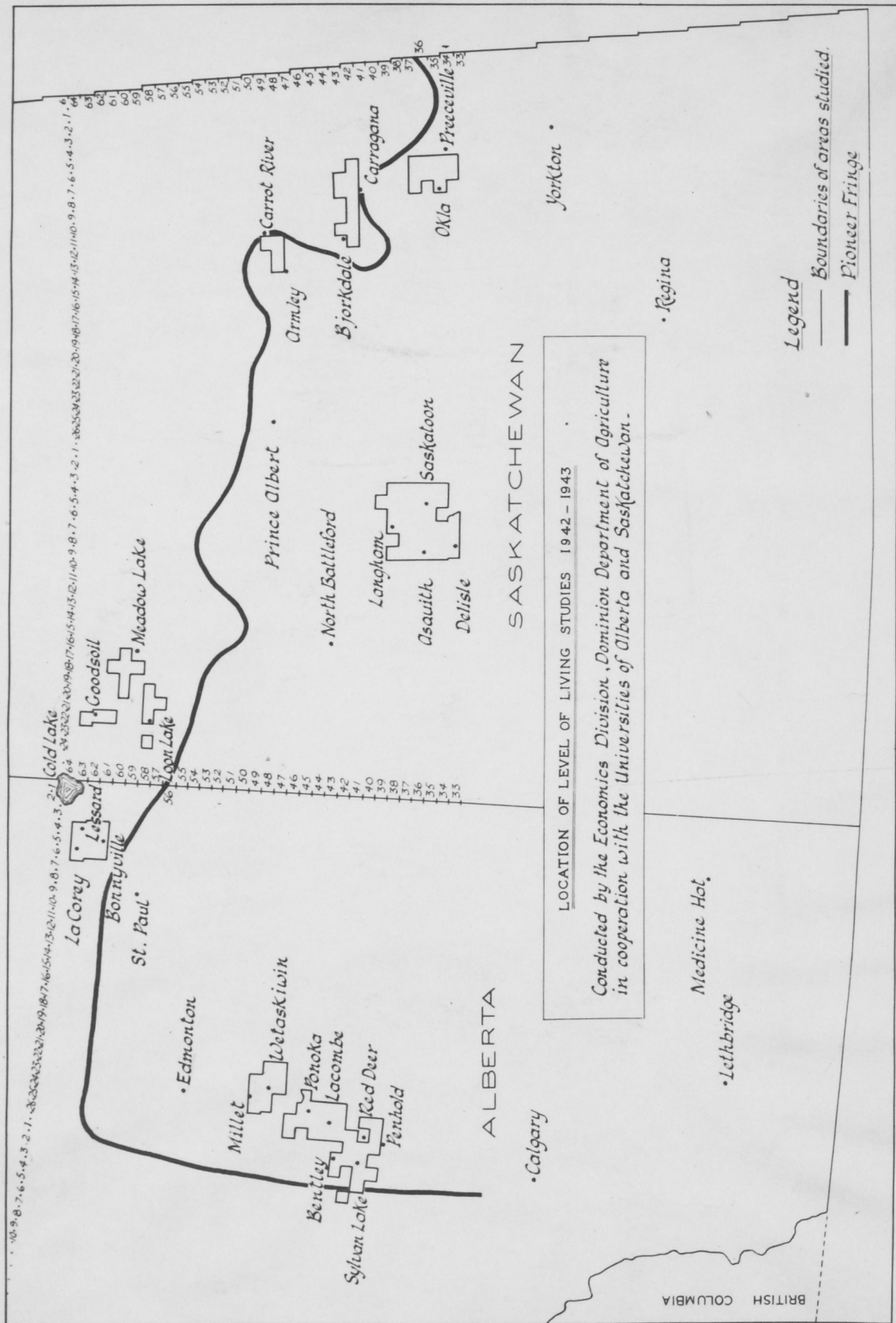
The well-being of the farm family, and the business of farming, are closely interrelated. A true appraisal of the farm unit as a central factor in the satisfaction of human wants requires not only the study of pecuniary values, but also an understanding of the farm home and community. Rural economists in Western Canada have furnished valuable information concerning the financial aspects of farming. Their research has pointed to the need for co-ordinated study of family, farm, and community. The present study, a general survey of levels of living in certain rural areas, was undertaken as a preliminary step in attaining such a combined approach.

Three areas were chosen for the study: one in West Central Alberta, one in West Central Saskatchewan, and one in Northern Saskatchewan (Figure 1). <sup>2/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> Agricultural Assistants, Economics Division, Marketing Service, Dominion Department of Agriculture.

<sup>2/</sup> Another area, namely Bonnyville in Northeastern Alberta, was given some attention in a special study of farm family living but fewer farms were visited than in each of the other areas. The information obtained was used in scale construction briefly referred to herein and in a separate publication. Data on farm living in the Bonnyville area are reported in "Land Settlement in Northeastern Alberta" by B. H. Kristjanson and C. C. Spence, Economics Division, Dominion Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, 1945.



Farm business studies were being conducted in these areas by the Economics Division, Dominion Department of Agriculture in co-operation with the Provincial Departments of Agriculture through the Universities of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The three areas represent quite different types of settlement. The first, that in West Central Alberta, is representative of a well developed type of mixed farming in a parkland region; the second (West Central Saskatchewan) of a type of enterprise in a prairie region, carried on under different conditions of soil and rainfall, in general rather less favourable for agriculture. Both may be considered relatively stable settlements. The third is a farming area located in the woodland regions of Northern Saskatchewan where settlement is in the pioneer stage of development.

**METHODS EMPLOYED.**—Field work was completed during the summers of 1942 and 1943. Homemakers of 622 farm families were interviewed, and asked a series of questions concerning their homes, the family's social activities, and the living expenditures for the year preceding the interview. The schedule used for recording the information appears in Appendix A.

All farms visited in the West Central Saskatchewan and Northern

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1/ Approximately 500 farms were covered in a farm business survey of the Cory-Asquith-Langham area in West Central Saskatchewan during the summer of 1943. R. A. Stutt, "The Farm Business in the Cory-Asquith-Langham Area, Saskatchewan", Economics Division, Dominion Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, 1945. Unpublished.

2/ Alberta, P. H. and R. E. Elliott, "Measurement of the Socio-Economic Status of Farm Families in Western Canada", Economics Division, Dominion Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, 1943. Unpublished.

1/ Saskatchewan areas were included also in business studies; therefore information on income was quite complete. For about 15 per cent of farms studied in West Central Alberta 2/ were complete business statements available; for the others information obtained in the interviews on farm inventories and sales of farm products for the preceding year provided a satisfactory basis for estimates of current income, for use in this study.

Analysis of the data has been divided into two parts. Facts concerning community facilities, social activities, farm housing, household conveniences, family living expenditures, and some variations in levels of living in the areas, are presented in this report. In addition, some attention was focused on the construction of a scale to give quantitative expression to differences in family living conditions. The methodology used in development of this scale is described in a separate publication. 3/

1/ Representative pioneer farming areas in the woodland regions of Northern Saskatchewan and Alberta were covered in farm business and land settlement studies in 1941, 1942, and 1943. In all, records were obtained on approximately 1,825 farms. Among these were farms in the Preeceville, Bjorkdale-Carragena, and Aylsham-Armley districts of northeastern Saskatchewan, and Meadow Lake, Loon Lake, and Goodsoil areas of northwestern Saskatchewan where the supplementary study pertaining to farm living was made. See, R. A. Stutt and H. Van Vliet, "An Economic Study of Land Settlement in Representative Pioneer Areas of Northern Saskatchewan", Economics Division, Dominion Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, 1945.

2/ Although the major emphasis has been placed on the study of dairy farm management and costs in producing milk, the farms covered in business studies in the general area of West Central Alberta, where the level of living study was conducted, were fairly representative of farming in that area. See, H. L. Patterson, "Dairy Farming in Alberta", Economics Division, Dominion Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, 1945.

3/ Edwards, F. M. and H. E. Elliott, "Measurement of the Socio-Economic Status of Farm Families in Western Canada", Economics Division, Dominion Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, 1945. Unpublished.

SELECTION OF CO-OPERATORS.—The family unit formed the basis for study.

No one-person households were included in the sample.

The number of families visited in each of the areas is shown in Table 1.

Table 1.—Distribution of the Sample by Districts

District	: Number of Families : Interviewed
West Central Alberta	202
West Central Saskatchewan	220
Northern Saskatchewan	200
Northeastern Alberta <sup>1</sup>	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>675<sup>2</sup></b>

<sup>1</sup>Some of the data secured in this area are treated in "Land Settlement in Northeastern Alberta" by B. H. Kristjanson and C. C. Spence.

<sup>2</sup>Three additional records which were used in the construction of the scale were omitted, since data on family living expenditures were incomplete.

In the field it was not found workable to use a strictly random method of sampling. However, selection was made without any known prejudice. In order to determine the extent to which sample farms were representative of the areas studied, some comparisons have been made on the basis of the 1941 Census of Agriculture. The size of farm was chosen as the most useful and stable single criterion by which the sample might be tested. The distribution by size groups of the sample farms and of all farms in the area studied is shown in Table 2. It is evident that farms of the Alberta and Northern Saskatchewan samples were quite comparable in size to those of the census divisions in which they were located. The sample in Central Saskatchewan included a greater proportion of large farms than did the municipalities sampled. Although, in this area, sample farms were not expected

Table 2.—Comparison of the Farms in Each Area Covered in the Level of Living Study with All Farms in the Corresponding Census Division, on the Basis of Size of Farm<sup>1</sup>

Acres Operated	Alberta		Saskatchewan		Manitoba		Ontario		Quebec		New Brunswick		Nova Scotia		Newfoundland		Total	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
100 and less	—	2	5.0	0.4 <sup>2</sup>	11.5	0.0 <sup>2</sup>	2.0	1.7 <sup>2</sup>	4.8									
101 to 200	32.8	33.9	8.1	8.1	26.2	52.5	39.8	38.7	52.8									
201 to 299	6.0	4.6	5.9	5.9	6.5	1.3	2.5	9.2	5.7									
300 to 479	30.9	50.3	46.2	46.2	28.9	25.6	27.7	31.1	25.4									
480 to 639	17.9	12.2	19.5	19.5	12.4	10.3	12.9	14.3	7.9									
640 and over	12.4	14.0	19.9	19.9	14.5	10.3	15.6	5.0	5.9									
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0									

<sup>1</sup>Preliminary data from Census of Canada, 1941.

<sup>2</sup>Market garden and other small farms surrounding Saskatoon were not covered in the sampling for the Level of Living Study.

to be strictly comparable to those of the census,<sup>1/</sup> the possibility of a slight bias toward the larger farms was given due emphasis in examination of the results of the study.

**DEFINITION OF TERMS.**--Three of the more common terms used throughout this report are defined as follows:

Standard of Living.--The standard of living is a subjective factor which plays a vital part in the life of every family. It is the particular pattern of goods and services considered essential, which the family makes every effort to secure.

Level of Living indicates the quantity and quality of goods and services possessed at a given time or consumed over a given period. It includes materially measurable possessions which imply the effort to satisfy social, cultural, and physical needs. Such aspects of life as health and provision for the future are included in level of living insofar as they are reflected by services consumed.

Socio-Economic Status as used here is the position that a family occupies with reference to the prevailing average standards of cultural possession, material possessions, and participation in the group activities of the community.

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1/ There are two important facts to be noted in this connection: (a) Surrounding the city of Saskatoon are a number of small part-time farms and market gardens. These are classified as farms for census purposes, but were excluded from the study because they were not typical of the rural area. (b) For census purposes, a farm composed of land in two divisions is recorded as two farms, each of course, smaller than the total farm unit. Since the four municipalities sampled are in three different census divisions, this difference in method of classification is a significant factor.

Socio-economic status, like level of living, may be objectively measured. But while level of living may be studied in its various aspects, socio-economic status, which is more limited in content, may be examined as a unit. The problem of its measurement is discussed in a later section.

The district of the Black River and its tributaries (Figure 1). Here, agriculture is a relatively stabilized and well developed industry. Progress and expansion since settlement began, around the year 1832, have been fairly steady, until today, this general district supports the two small cities mentioned, the thriving towns of Poncha and Leadville, and a number of smaller centres.

The park belt, while subject to regional variation, has certain general characteristics. Its topography is, in the main, level to rolling. The natural vegetation consists of an abundance of grasses, and considerable light tree growth. The Black park soils contain a large amount of organic matter, and they retain moisture fairly efficiently. Rainfall is more abundant and somewhat less variable than on the prairie plains to the south.

The picture, then, is that of an area well suited to agriculture. Mixed farming is common. Because there is a considerable variety of farm products, and because the hazards from climatic variation are fewer than in many parts of the Prairie Provinces, income, for the district, is comparatively stable.

The size of farms for the co-operators in the study averaged 348 acres operated, and 8.2 acres improved. During the farm business year 1942-43,

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1/ Farms of the sample are comparable in size to farms of the district sampled (Table 2).

### WEST CENTRAL ALBERTA

THE AREA AND ITS FARMS.—Within Alberta's portion of the fertile park belt of the Prairie Provinces are the farming districts around and between the cities of Red Deer and Wetaskiwin (Figure 1). Here, agriculture is a relatively stabilized and well developed industry. Progress and expansion since settlement began, around the year 1892, have been fairly steady, until today, this general district supports the two small cities mentioned, the thriving towns of Ponoka and Lacombe, and a number of smaller centres.

The park belt, while subject to regional variation, has certain general characteristics. Its topography is, in the main, level to rolling. The natural vegetation consists of an abundance of grasses, and considerable light tree growth. The black park soils contain a large amount of organic matter, and they retain moisture fairly efficiently. Rainfall is more abundant and somewhat less variable than on the prairie plains to the south.

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The size of farms for the co-operators in the study averaged 348 acres operated, and 209 acres improved.<sup>1/</sup> During the farm business year 1942-43,

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<sup>1/</sup> Farms of the sample are comparable in size to farms of the district sampled (Table 2).

approximately 50 per cent of the cultivated acreage was in oats and barley. One-fourth was fallow; the remainder was about equally divided between wheat, and cultivated hay and pasture. There was some live stock on every farm visited. All but two had some milk cows at the end of the study year, 64 per cent having more than five. The products of dairying were readily marketable throughout the area as churning cream, and as wholemilk at the Red Deer Condensery and in retail trade. Nine-tenths of co-operators kept some other cattle- one-half had more than five.<sup>1/</sup> The average number of cattle sold during the study year, by the 69 per cent who sold cattle, was eight head. The hog enterprise was of considerable importance in the area. Ninety-two per cent of operators had at least one sow, and they sold on the average sixty-two hogs each. Forty-six per cent had 6 or more sows.

Since the turn of the century, population in the district has increased almost sixfold.<sup>2/</sup> A branch line to the transcontinental railway was built to service the territory in 1891. The rapid expansion of the fifteen years following this event may be illustrated by reference to the growth of one of the centres, Wetaskiwin, where the first settlement of any

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<sup>1/</sup> Calves under six months were excluded in the tabulation.

<sup>2/</sup> In Census Division 8, within which is the sample area, population increased from 11,904 in 1901 to 67,630 in 1941. The rural population has always comprised from seven-to eight-tenths of the total number.

size took place the year after the line was constructed.<sup>1/</sup> In 1897 an elevator was built at this tiny centre. A village was established in 1900. The Census of 1901 reported a population of 323; the next year the Province recognized its incorporation as a town. By 1906 the population was over 1,400 and Wetaskiwin had become a city.

COMMUNICATIONS.--The isolation that was characteristic of the early days of settlement has virtually disappeared for the townsfolk. Today the cities of Red Deer and Wetaskiwin, and the towns of Lacombe and Ponoka are situated on a main highway, and have bus and train service daily or oftener. A few gravelled roads link these centres with other towns. The majority of the rural population, however, continues to depend on dirt roads for access to town or to an all-weather highway.

While sharing with most of the Province's farm people the difficulties of reliance on dirt roads, the families of this district had a comparative advantage in regard to means of communication. Almost 80 per cent of the 202 co-operator families owned automobiles.<sup>2/</sup> The recent census revealed that in 1941 fewer than half of all Alberta's farmers owned automobiles.<sup>3/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> Among the settlers of 1892 were a group of German immigrants brought there by the Canadian Government. Establishment of settlers in groups by the colonization agencies was a common feature of the expansion of the Prairie Provinces.

<sup>2/</sup> A number of others used a farm truck to meet the needs of the family.

<sup>3/</sup> Dominion Census of Agriculture 1941, Preliminary Release No. .

Telephones were found in half of the homes visited for the study; in 1941, 18 per cent of farm homes in this Province were serviced with telephones.

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES.**--While a detailed description of the towns and cities of the district is not purposed here, mention must be made of a few of the facilities particularly important to the surrounding farm population. All of the co-operator families utilized the services offered by one or more of the four main centres. In addition, postal service, general stores, and shipping points were provided for some by villages in the surrounding territory. While variation from family to family was great, generally speaking, co-operators in the study were within reach of most of the services they required.

**Trading and Commercial Facilities.**--Most of the numerous business facilities required in an active agricultural district were available in these centres. One or both of the larger cities of Edmonton and Calgary were within about one hundred miles of most of the co-operators, and many of them made occasional trips to one of these cities.

Certain facilities found in each of the four larger centres were worthy of note. Mail was delivered by rural routes to a considerable number of farm families. Newspapers from Edmonton and Calgary were received in the towns daily, and each of the four published its own weekly paper. At Red Deer, Lacombe, and Wetaskiwin were cold storage locker plants which were particularly useful to families who made frequent trips to town. Here fruits and vegetables, as well as fish, fowl, game and meat could be quick

frozen, then stored until needed. In each centre among the stores, there was a co-operative one which sold groceries, clothing, hardware, and sometimes gasoline and oil.

Health Services.—There were doctors and dentists in each of the four centres, and hospitals at Red Deer, Lacombe, and Wetaskiwin. Red Deer had in addition a Provincial Health Unit, which did important preventive and educational work. Health officers visited rural schools in their district, and parents were encouraged to participate in these visits. Pre-school children received attention at baby clinics, held in the city and in surrounding small towns. Some home visits were made in the rural areas.

This was the only health unit in the territory of the study; elsewhere municipal hospitals served as centres for health education. In Wetaskiwin, municipalities provided materials and staff for immunization of children in the rural schools.

A recent trend in regard to health services was of importance for farm families. Doctors, finding necessary ever increasing economy of time, made few rural calls. The matron of one hospital stated that, in the few cases where farm folk could not supply transportation into town, doctors would send ambulances for their patients rather than travel long distances for home visits.

In brief, it may be said that health services in the area were relatively well developed. Substantial progress had been made toward the still remote goal of adequate care for all.

Education.—In this, as in any well settled area, grade schools were within relatively easy reach for most farm families. Frequently the rural schools offered instruction in grade nine subjects, and occasionally in high school subjects. Most high school facilities, however, were concentrated in the towns and cities. In the larger city, Red Deer, rural students might take advantage of a dormitory which was connected with the school division, or of the Roman Catholic convent. In the other towns the students located living quarters without official supervision. For such special instruction as Normal School or technical training, young people of these areas must travel to Edmonton or Calgary; for University, to Edmonton; for School of Agriculture, to Olds.

Opportunities for adult education were presented and encouraged through extension workers of the Provincial Department of Agriculture, both by District Agriculturists and by District Home Economists. The Dominion Experimental Station at Lacombe maintained important contacts with the rural population of the vicinity.

Sports and Recreation.—It is hardly an exaggeration to say that organized participant sport was almost non-existent in these rural communities. Schools served to some extent as centres for such activity—children might take part there in skating, baseball or games. Some of the families living close to towns had the opportunity of using local tennis courts, curling or skating rinks.

Theatres operated in each of the four centres. Dances were held in towns, rural community halls, and school houses. Apart from attendance at

theatres, dances and occasionally at fairs or concerts, recreation was informal, centring around family activity.

**THE FARM FAMILIES.—General Characteristics.**—Since the present enquiry aimed at preliminary general description, the field workers covered a considerable territory and included many communities. As long as it is remembered that every family represented a type different in some respects from every other family, it may be useful to examine some of the characteristics of the sample families as a group: their racial origin and birthplace, age of farm operators, size of families, education, and previous occupations of the heads of families.

Of the 202 farm operators in the study, nearly two-thirds were born on this continent. About one-tenth were born in Britain and one-fifth were European born. Racial origin showed the varied patterns common to much of Canada. Over half the farmers were of British stock. There were numbers of many European and Eurasian races; of these the Scandinavians comprised the largest single group—one-sixth of the total.

The average of the ages of farm operators was 47 years. About 25 per cent were in the age group 40 to 49. The average number in the family was 4.2. Average number of persons per household was 4.6. The "family" included related persons supported from a common purse, whether at home or

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<sup>1/</sup> Distribution of the sample according to racial origins corresponded closely to that for Census Division 8, 1941.

children, townfolk, relatives, and others.

away at school. The "number of persons in the household" included those living in the home: family, hired help, and boarders or others.

The extent of formal education of operators and their wives is indicated in Chart 1. Most commonly, operators had completed eight grades of schooling; one-third reported some high school training. A little over half of the homemakers had some high school.

Fewer than half of the farm operators had engaged in any full time occupations other than farming. Six had been in professions, 19 in skilled jobs or trades, 20 in clerical or sales work, and 47 in unskilled jobs.

Leisure Time Activities.—The family, as the most fundamental and closely knit of social groups, plays a major part in the formation of social and cultural patterns. Isolation and the interdependence within the group make this doubly true of the farm family. Thus the social and cultural life of these families cannot be completely revealed by an objective study of their contacts with the outside world. These contacts are nonetheless of great importance, and an examination of the data under this head reveals interesting facts.

Informal visiting and entertaining appeared to be the most common type of social activity. Three-fifths of the homemakers estimated that they "had company" once a week or oftener. However, for only one-quarter of the families did operator or homemaker visit friends with the same frequency. Evidently, guests included many besides neighbouring farm couples: children, townsfolk, relatives, and others.

The frequency of attendance at some leisure time activities is indicated in Chart 2. Three-quarters of the families went to church at some time during the year; of these about three-fifths attended monthly or oftener. Attendance at theatres was common, two-thirds of the families attending at some time during the year, and approximately one-quarter attending more than once a month. About half of the families took part in some picnics or parties; just over a third in dances. About one-third had gone to fairs during the year, and a number mentioned other activities, such as skating, swimming, concerts, hunting and fishing.

The extent to which social activities were family activities was worthy of note. Of the families who attended church, 70 per cent reported that the entire family went along; 90 per cent that half or more of the family went. Again, of those who attended parties and theatres, about four-fifths indicated that these activities included at least half of the family.

Community organizations were evidently of some importance in the lives of these families; one-third of the homemakers and one-fourth of the operators belonged to some organization.

Interviewers recorded the types of reading material, and the amount of time devoted to reading. The most common type of reading appeared to be the weekly newspaper; 95 per cent subscribed to at least one such paper. About an eighth of the families visited subscribed to a daily paper. Four-fifths took at least one magazine; approximately 60 per cent took two or more. <sup>1/</sup> Fewer than one-sixth of the families used any library. The time spent in reading was less than four hours per week, for about half of the operators and of their wives. <sup>2/</sup> Many of the co-operators deplored the lack of

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<sup>1/</sup> Magazines bought regularly at the counter were included as well as subscriptions.

<sup>2/</sup> Since variation from week to week and from season to season was considerable, it was difficult for the co-operators to suggest an average figure. Records were taken during the fall, a busy season, when leisure was rare, and reading time might have been underestimated.

households, evaluated from the study, were included in the census. Table 3 provides greater detail regarding the number of rooms available to households of various sizes. Three-quarters of the houses provided one room or more per person. While the number of rooms, without consideration of their size, is an imperfect indication of the adequacy of living space, it did appear evident that overcrowding was not among the more pressing problems for the majority of the families visited.

time for reading and other leisure activities; a number remarked that this difficulty was accentuated by the extra tasks and the shortage of help of war years.

**HOUSING AND HOME CONVENIENCES.**—The 202 farm homes visited were rated by enumerators as in good, fair, or poor condition, depending on their structure and state of repair. Eighteen per cent were reported to be in poor condition, 52 per cent in fair condition, and 30 per cent in good condition.

The houses were predominantly of wood structure. About half had at some time been painted. One-third were unpainted frame, some were stucco, a few were brick and a few log (Appendix A).

The average number of rooms in these homes was 5.6. All farm homes of Alberta, according to the 1941 census, averaged 4.1 rooms. It should be noted in comparison, however, that homes of hired help, and one-person households, excluded from the study, were included in the census. Table 3 provides greater detail regarding the number of rooms available to households of various sizes. Three-quarters of the homes provided one room or more per person. While the number of rooms, without consideration of their size, is an imperfect indication of the adequacy of living space, it did appear evident that overcrowding was not among the more pressing problems for the majority of the families visited.

Electric lighting was found in about 15 per cent of the homes. Sixty-two per cent had some type of mantle lamp, such as an oil-burner, or gas mantle lamp. Approximately one home in five depended entirely on coal oil with lamps.

Table 3.—Size and Accommodation of 202 Farm Homes in West Central Alberta

Number of Rooms	Number of Occupants									Total Number of Families
	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight	Nine	Ten and over	
1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
2	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
3	-	1	6	1	-	-	-	-	-	8
4	1	9	8	10	2	1	-	-	-	31
5	6	9	15	11	9	5	-	-	1	56
6	11	5	11	12	4	3	-	-	1	47
7	1	5	8	7	3	1	1	1	1	28
8	1	4	3	2	2	-	4	1	-	17
9	2	1	2	-	-	-	2	1	1	9
Total number of families	24	35	56	45	20	10	7	3	4	202

Some other facts concerning housing may be noted here. Ninety-four per cent had a basement of some type. Thirty-five per cent had full basements which were partially or completely boarded or cemented; an equal number had a dirt cellar under part of the house. The others had either full-size dirt basements, or smaller, improved basements.

Approximately one-half had two or more built-in clothes closets, a quarter had one, and a quarter had none. Screen windows and screen doors were found on almost all homes. About two-thirds had some storm windows.

Floors were usually softwood, although 8 per cent had some hardwood floors. The usual living room floor covering was linoleum or congoleum. Approximately nine-tenths had this type of covering on kitchen floors.

Electric lighting was found in about 15 per cent of the homes. Sixty-two per cent had some type of mantle lamp, such as an aladdin, or gas mantle lamp. Approximately one home in five depended entirely on coal oil wick lamps.

The typical unit of heating was the coal or wood heater. However, 30 per cent had a furnace or other central heating system. In a few homes, the kitchen stove was the only source of heat.<sup>1/</sup>

There was a gas or electric washing machine in about three-fifths of the homes visited. Half of the remainder used hand powered washers. One-fifth were without equipment of either type.

Running water, a convenience taken for granted by most urban householders, was installed in about one-tenth of the farm homes of the sample. About an eighth had soft water cisterns. Four-fifths, however, had neither one of these conveniences. Fifteen per cent of the homes had bathrooms, but not all of these were fully equipped--13 per cent hav<sup>-ing</sup> a bathtub or shower, but only 7 per cent having a flush toilet. Again, one home in ten had a septic tank or an equivalent means of sewage disposal.

Although approximately two-fifths of the kitchens contained sinks, the proportion having efficient drainage for them was considerably smaller.

Important among the more common types of equipment, radios were found in nine-tenths of the homes. Also general were sewing machines; about the same proportion of homemakers had them.<sup>2/</sup>

It has already been noted that about half of the homes were equipped with telephones.

<sup>1/</sup> See comparative tables, Appendix B.

<sup>2/</sup> More than half of these had been purchased second hand, while in only 15 per cent of homes was the radio second hand.

The relative position of the homes of the sample group, in regard to some home conveniences available, may be suggested by the following chart, a comparison of the sample group to all farm homes in Alberta, and to an urban group (Chart 3).

**LIVING EXPENDITURES.**—Before proceeding to a discussion of the family living expenditures, it may be well to note that data following are approximate. Very few families were keeping account of household expenses at the time of the study. In surveys using the single-interview technique, some co-operators overestimate their yearly expenditure, some underestimate them. However, data are studied in groups and errors of opposite types tend to counteract each other. There was some tendency for homemakers to forget small occasional items of expense, in spite of specific questions about gifts and other incidentals. When used with regard for their limitations, estimates of expenditure may serve a useful purpose.

The inquiry pertained to the twelve-month period just preceding the start of the survey, that is, from September 1, 1942 to September 1, 1943. Estimates were obtained of cash expenditure for family living, and values were assigned for items furnished by the farm: food, fuel, and the use of the farm house.

**Living Costs and Distribution.**—The average total living expenditure for the 202 families was \$1,647. Of this, \$1,031 (63 per cent) was cash expenditure, \$616 (37 per cent) was non-cash, the value of goods furnished by the farm.

Variation in amounts spent for cash living was great. <sup>1/</sup> Half of the

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<sup>1/</sup> The standard deviation from the average of \$1,031 was \$426.

families spent less than \$940 cash, half spent more. One-third of the families were within \$140 of this median, that is, between \$800 and \$1,080. When the highest 5 per cent and the lowest 5 per cent were excluded, the remaining 90 per cent of cash expenditures ranged from \$510 to \$1,790.

Levels of living have frequently been assessed through the study of allocation of living expenditure to various groups of goods and services. The assumption is, that so long as the basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, and the maintenance of health are adequately met, increased expenditure for education, recreation, and the satisfaction of cultural needs indicates a higher level of living. The following classification of expenditure was used here:

Food included all food purchased and the cash value of food furnished by the farm. Meats, poultry, eggs, dairy products, fruits, and vegetables were valued at what they would have brought the farmer had he sold them during the year.

Clothing included all items purchased during the year. The cost of materials for clothing made at home, was included.

Rent for use of the farm home was considered to be 15 per cent of the value of the house.<sup>1/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> Since most homemakers had no idea of the value of their houses, a system of approximation was used. Enumerators rated houses according to size (small, medium, or large) and condition (poor, fair, or good). Values were then assigned according to a schedule of average known values for comparable ratings made in a number of farm areas of the Prairie Provinces (Appendix C). A check on the system was possible since a number of co-operators were able to state actual values.

Operation goods and services included the value of fuel furnished by the farm and fuel purchased, expenditure for household light and power, and maids hired. One-half of the money spent for telephone was considered to be household expenditure, the other half a farm business expenditure. Similarly, in the case of the automobile, one-half of the current expenses for gasoline, oil, license, and repairs was regarded as expenditure for family living.

Furnishings included furniture, carpets, curtains, bedding, table-ware, utensils. Increase in capital investment such as installation of waterworks and structural additions to the house did not come within this group.

Health expenditures included fees paid during the year for doctors, nurses, eye examinations, glasses, medicines, hospital, and travel for obtaining health services.

Personal goods included sundry expenses such as treats and gifts, tobacco, barbers' or hairdressers' fees, and toilet articles.

Advancement goods included all expenditures for education, music, books, magazines and newspapers, vacations, social activities, associations, and contributions to church and charity.

Life insurance was considered a separate item.

The percentage allocation of the living expenditure to these various groups of goods and services is shown in Chart 4. Two-fifths of the total

family living was allotted to food costs.<sup>1/</sup> One-sixth was allotted to rent, about one-eighth to clothing. In other words, when values of farm furnished goods were taken into account, it was found that 70 per cent of the total value of family living was allotted to food, clothing and shelter. When cash expenditures only were considered, it was noted that over half (55 per cent) was spent for food and clothing.

The average total food cost was \$671: \$56 per family per month or \$12 per person per month. Fifty-four per cent of this (\$364 per family) was cash expenditure. Farm furnished food items with average dollar values were as follows: milk and cream, \$111; meats, \$68; vegetables and fruits, \$67; eggs, \$45; and butter, \$14.<sup>2/</sup>

Values assigned for the use of the farm house averaged \$275, 17 per cent of the total value of family living.

The clothing expenditure of \$200 per family accounted for 12 per cent of the total value of family living. Allotment of the money spent for clothing to individual needs showed considerable variation. Cash outlay per person was \$47; the average per man being \$64, per woman \$55, and per

<sup>1/</sup> Value of non-cash foods was considerably larger during the study year, than the long-time average. Prices for which these goods might have been sold were unusually high.

<sup>2/</sup> Because of special circumstances the amount of butter produced on the farm for family use was very small during the study year. Cream was readily marketable, and a Dominion subsidy made its value almost equivalent to that of butter sold in the creameries or retail stores. Many co-operators stated that they bought all their butter after it became a rationed article (December 21, 1942). The saving of time, also, was an important consideration for these busy homemakers.

child for families having children <sup>1/</sup>\$28. But while 63 per cent of the money spent per man was used to buy work clothes, 68 per cent of the money spent per woman was used for dress clothes.

The value of operation goods and services averaged \$157, almost one-tenth of the total. Four-fifths of this amount was cash expenditure. As might be expected, fuel was the largest item in the group. Coal purchased averaged \$30, wood purchased \$2, and wood furnished from the farm \$33. It was noted that 85 per cent of the co-operators purchased some coal during the study year, and that an equal number used some wood from the farm, while only 10 per cent reported some cash spent for provision of wood. The other main item of expense for operation goods was for automobile. Average amount charged to family living was \$55 per farm, or \$60 for each of the 80 per cent who had an automobile. <sup>2/</sup>The cost of lighting was \$13 per year. It has been pointed out that 85 per cent of families used gas or coal oil lamps. Maids hired accounted for \$14 per family for the entire group, but only one-quarter of the families spent more than \$5 during the year for household help. The remaining item in this expenditure group was the telephone, which cost on the average \$5 per family (\$10 per household for those having telephones). <sup>3/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> Children included those 14 years of age and younger. It should be remembered that economies through sewing at home are more general for women's and children's clothing than for men's.

<sup>2/</sup> and <sup>3/</sup> As already noted, half of the current expense for automobile, and for telephone, was charged to family living, the other half to the farm business.

Health expenditures accounted for 5 per cent of the total living expenditure—\$84 per family. Provision for doctors' and dentists' services cost \$36 and \$12, respectively. Other main items were: hospital \$14, eye examinations and glasses \$7, medical supplies and preparations \$11, tonics and vitamin concentrates \$3 per year. In comment upon the range of health expenditures, it may be stated that 25 families spent \$200 or more on health, while 33 families spent \$10 or less.

Sundry personal expenditures amounted to an estimated \$68 per family per year—4 per cent of the total value of living. Here again, variation from family to family was considerable.

New furnishings and household equipment cost \$58 per family, a little less than 4 per cent of the living expenditure.

The items grouped together as "advancement" totalled \$101, which was 6 per cent of the total living. An estimated \$36 per family was contributed to church and charity. Social activities, and associations amounted to \$15, vacations to \$16. (In three-fifths of the families no one had a vacation during the study year.) School books were \$5 per family. While other school expenses averaged \$15 per family for the entire group, 99 per cent of expenditures in this group came from 18 families, who averaged \$164 each for the support of children away at school. Two of these families were helping daughters to take nursing courses, one had a girl at Normal School, and one a son at University. Expenditures for magazines, papers, music, and books were much more evenly distributed, and the average of \$13 per family was quite representative.

Life insurance accounted for the remaining 2 per cent of total family living expenditure. The average for all families was \$33. Actually fewer than two-fifths paid life insurance premiums during the year, and these averaged \$91 each.

Variation in Expenditure Patterns with Increased Amounts Spent for Living.—As the cash living expenditure increased, the percentage of the total value of all goods and services which was purchased increased also, while the percentage furnished from the farm decreased (Table 4). In other words, though the values of farm furnished goods increased, they did not increase proportionately to cash living expenditure.

Table 4.—Values of Goods Purchased and Goods Furnished at Various Expenditure Levels

Cash Living Expenditure <sup>1</sup>	Average Value of Goods and Services				Number of Families
	Total	Purchased	Furnished	Percentage of Total	
\$	\$	\$	\$	%	No.
\$600 and less	507	452	959	53	29
\$610 to \$800	714	544	1,258	57	35
\$810 to \$1,000	899	618	1,517	59	50
\$1,010 to \$1,200	1,099	611	1,710	64	29
\$1,210 and over	1,554	741	2,295	68	59
All families	1,031	616	1,647	63	202

<sup>1</sup>To nearest ten.

Allocation of the cash living expenditure to the various groups of goods and services is indicated in Tables 5 and 6. Some of the more important trends evidenced in these tables may be summarized as follows:

Table 5.—Amounts Spent for Various Groups of Goods and Services by Total Cash Living Expenditure, 202 Families in West Central Alberta

	Cash Family Living Expenditure					Average
	\$600	\$610	\$810	\$1,010	\$1,210	for All
	and less	to \$800	to \$1,000	to \$1,200	and over	Families
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Food	251	299	340	422	459	364
Clothing	93	128	174	197	318	200
Operation goods	56	96	111	139	173	123
New furnishings	28	30	53	53	96	58
Health	30	39	60	107	147	94
Personal	31	46	64	63	105	68
Advancement	31	51	74	88	196	101
Life insurance	7	25	23	30	60	33
Number in family	3.6	3.5	3.9	4.5	5.1	4.2
Number of families	29	35	50	29	59	202

Table 6.—Percentage Allocation of Cash Expenditure to Various Groups of Goods and Services by Cash Living Expenditure

	Cash Family Living Expenditure					Average
	\$600	\$610	\$810	\$1,010	\$1,210	for All
	and less	to \$800	to \$1,000	to \$1,200	and over	Families
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Food	46	42	38	38	30	35
Clothing	18	18	19	18	20	19
Operation goods	11	14	12	12	11	12
New furnishings	6	4	6	5	6	6
Health	6	5	7	10	9	8
Personal	6	6	7	6	7	7
Advancement	6	7	8	8	13	10
Life insurance	1	4	3	3	4	3
	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number in family	3.6	3.5	3.9	4.5	5.1	4.2
Number of families	29	35	50	29	59	202

(1) As the total amount of cash living expenditure increased, amounts spent for each of the groups of goods and services increased. From low to high expenditure groups, amounts spent for food approximately doubled, while amounts spent for clothing, operation goods, new furnishings, and personal goods increased about three-and one-half times. Expenditure for advancement, however, increased six times, for health five times, and for life insurance eight times.

(2) As the total amount of cash living expenditure increased, percentages of the total cash living which were spent for food decreased.

(3) As the total amount of cash living expenditure increased, percentages allotted to advancement goods and to life insurance tended generally to increase.

Percentages spent for other cash items were not greatly affected by the amount of the cash living.

Expenditures for the items in the "advancement" group may be examined in Chart 5. The population is here divided into three expenditure groups. While amounts spent for each of these items increased, the most striking increases were for educational expenditures, and for vacations.

# WEST CENTRAL SASKATCHEWAN

THE AREA AND ITS FARMS.--Representative of the most common type of agriculture in the Western Provinces is that carried on in the territory a few miles west of Saskatoon. Geographically this area is near the centre of the agricultural settlement of the West, but it is not only from the standpoint of location that this area occupies a mid-way position. It lies near the northern edge of the dark brown soil belt, with the native vegetation, largely that of the prairies, interspersed with the occasional aspen grove, and taller grasses characteristic of the park belt to the north and east. The annual rainfall is about average for the prairies, but on account of the more northerly location of the area, the rate of evaporation is not as rapid as on the prairie to the south and west, and consequently it is subject to less arid conditions.

As elsewhere on the prairies, wheat has proven the hardiest annual, and is the principal crop. Coarse grains, however, compete more successfully with wheat here, than farther to the south and west in Saskatchewan and in southeastern Alberta. The topography of this area is generally level to gently rolling with only occasional sloughs and poorly drained depressions to be by-passed in the cultivation of fairly large fields. The soil varies from a sandy loam to a clay loam, but generally is loam. It does not rate high in fertility for wheat production as does soil in the Rosetown area some fifty miles to the

southwest, or for coarse grain production as do the black soils of the Red Deer-Wetaskiwin area noted in the previous chapter. However the soil in this mid-way area is by no means the least fertile to be found in the West.

The typical farm in this West Central Saskatchewan area varies in size from a half to three-quarters of a section with about 80 per cent improved. Nearly one-half of the improved acreage is normally in wheat, with the remainder divided between other crops (chiefly oats and barley) and fallow. The acreage in fallow normally exceeds that of crops other than wheat, and its main purpose is to conserve moisture. Where the soil is quite sandy, particularly nearer the city of Saskatoon, and on farms producing milk for the city, there is likely to be part of the land in sweet clover, brome and crested wheat grass--grown for hay and pasture, and to protect the soil from wind erosion.

On most of these farms live stock is kept. Cattle numbers average from 9 to 12; on some farms predominantly beef, on others dairy, and on many, mixed breeds. There are one to two sows, with a larger number of hogs marketed in recent years than formerly. There are few farms with sheep; but all have hens averaging, until recent years, about 60 per farm. Although the average number of horses on these farms is 6, in recent years horses are not used as much as formerly. Tractors are used on more than three-fifths of the farms.

In the organization of the farms in this area, from the standpoint of the utilization of the land, there are two chief differences from the

Red Deer-Wetaskiwin area. The one is a smaller number of live stock kept per one hundred acres of cropland, and the other is a greater wheat acreage in proportion to the coarse grains and hay. It should be noted, however, that the organization of these farms differs from the wheat farms of the central and southern prairies, particularly those nearer the city of Saskatoon. Here the number of milk cows <sup>per farm</sup> is greater than further out from the city, but such a small district is not typical of the area. As with any other area there are wide variations from any typical which might be discerned.

It is nearly forty years since the earliest settlers commenced to break out the land. A goodly part of it was under cultivation at the time of the outbreak of the first Great War. During the expansion in wheat acreage which accompanied those war years the soil of the remaining cultivated land of today was broken. In fact there was also broken up at the time a considerable area of sandy loam soil, that has subsequently been abandoned for cultivation. During these relatively prosperous years for the area most of the present farm buildings were erected. In this West Central Saskatchewan area the people have had a few relatively prosperous years, but also a succession of years when crops failed, needed repairs to buildings were not made, and land became weedy on account of lack of capital to properly farm it. From these drouth and depression years there has been some recovery. It would seem, too, that the agriculture has reached a stage of maturity and a type definitely settled. The very modest incomes from farming which can be expected are not likely to place

the area among the more prosperous, and yet not among the least prosperous ones in the West. It was because of this maturity in the agriculture and its mid-way position in a number of respects, that the area was selected for special study of farm family levels of living.

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES.—Railway lines and gravelled highways radiate from Saskatoon, and together with fairly good municipal roads throughout most of the area, provided relatively adequate transportation facilities. Almost two-thirds of the co-operators owned automobiles. Communication by telephone was common in this area—71 per cent of homes had telephones.

Local centres which serviced the area, with their small general stores, garages, repair shops, elevators, churches and schools, provided the more frequent and immediate needs of the surrounding farm communities. Among these centres were the towns of Asquith, Delisle, and Langham and the villages of Vanscoy and Dalmeny. These were small centres—each had a population under 400, according to the recent census.<sup>1/</sup>

The city of Saskatoon was about 40 miles distant from the farthest point of the area studied. Its department stores, clothing and furniture shops, theatres, libraries, and educational institutions made available services which supplemented those offered by the smaller community centres.

A large part of the area was served by rural mail deliveries.

Grade schools were well distributed throughout the area; high schools were located in the towns. At Saskatoon were several business colleges,

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<sup>1/</sup> Census of Canada, 1941.

a technical school, Normal school, and the University of Saskatchewan.

Adequate medical services were lacking throughout much of the area. There were no local hospitals, dentists or opticians, and only one local doctor, who was located at Warman. A number of families had to travel 30 to 40 miles to reach the excellent facilities available at Saskatoon.

THE FARM FAMILIES.—General Characteristics.—Over three-quarters of the farm operators were born on this continent.<sup>1/</sup> Half of all those interviewed were of Anglo-Saxon origin. The largest groups of the many others represented were the Dutch (one-seventh of the total), the German (one-eighth), and the Russian (one-twelfth).

The average age of farm operators of the study was 49 years. The average number of the family in the home was 4.5 persons. About two-fifths of the families reported less than 4 persons at home; about 9 per cent were of 8 or more persons. Families whose children were all adult comprised a little more than one-third of the farm families studied.

The majority of the farm operators and housewives had no high school education; only 18 per cent of operators and 28 per cent of their wives having had some schooling beyond Grade 8. However, half the operators and almost two-thirds of the housewives had at least the equivalent of Grade 8 education.

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<sup>1/</sup> In the Province of Saskatchewan the percentage of the population which was Canadian or American born was 77.1. Census of Canada, 1936.

<sup>1/</sup> Children's books and school books excluded.

Social and Cultural Activities.—In these, as in the communities studied in West Central Alberta, evidences of deliberate provision for social and cultural development were few. Most homemakers remarked on their long hours of work each day, which left little time for leisure activities. Although Sundays were seldom spent entirely in working, on many farms necessary chores took up a considerable part of the day. Very few people found vacations possible—fewer than 14 per cent of homemakers reported that some member of the family had had any vacation during the study year.

One-fifth of the co-operators subscribed to a daily paper. Practically all of them took at least one weekly paper, and two-fifths received at least two magazines a month. About one-third reported having ten or more books in the home,<sup>1/</sup> but these were, in many cases, old. Except in a few rare instances, no new books were bought during the year of study. Since about three-fifths of operators and homemakers spent fewer than four hours a week in reading, it was not surprising to note that only one-sixth used a library of any kind.

The radio was apparently an important source of contact with the outside world. Eighty-six per cent of families reported that they were accustomed to listen to the daily news; approximately 70 per cent used the radio for some leisure entertainment each day.

Visiting and entertaining, though for the most part quite casual, was

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<sup>1/</sup> Children's books and school books excluded.

nonetheless of importance for these families. Participation in more formal social activities was not very general. A few picnics, parties and dances were held. Since there were no theatres in the local villages, these families might attend 'shows' only in Saskatoon.

Membership in community organizations was less general for these co-operators than for those in West Central Alberta. One-fifth of homemakers, and 6 per cent of farm operators belonged to organizations, while in the West Central Alberta area one-third of homemakers and one-quarter of operators reported such membership. It appeared probable that the influence of the nearby city, which offered many more facilities and attractions than those of the local centres, was a limiting factor to rural community activity in this area.

**HOUSING AND HOME CONVENIENCES.**—Examination of the structure and state of repair of homes in the area revealed that many of them were in poor condition. Actual ratings were as follows: 43 per cent poor; 47 per cent fair; and 10 per cent good. Houses were almost exclusively of frame structure. More than half of the total were unpainted frame, about two-fifths were painted frame, and a few were stucco or log houses.

There was little evidence of overcrowding, since about three-quarters of the families had one or more rooms per person. About two-fifths of the homes had a separate dining-room, and nine-tenths of them had either a separate living-room or a living-dining room combination. About two-thirds had at least one built-in clothes closet.

Unimproved dirt cellars or basements were reported in 54 per cent of the homes; 45 per cent had either full basements, or partial basements improved by the addition of concrete or wooden walls or floors.

Two-thirds of the homes were heated by coal or wood heaters, while about one-quarter had central heating system. Sixteen of the 220 homes were heated by kitchen stove only.

Very few homes had fully equipped bathrooms, since only 4 per cent had running water and only 3 per cent a septic tank. About 6 per cent had partially equipped bathrooms.

Lighting was almost exclusively by means of gas and coal oil; only 8 per cent had electricity. In about half the homes a gas or coal oil mantle lamp was used, while for over two-fifths the old type of kerosene wick lamp provided the only light.

Half of the homemakers used power washing machines, another third having hand turned washers.

Furniture had, in a great many cases, been purchased second hand, and had seen long years of service. About half the families had a chesterfield or lounge, fewer than half had one or more easy chairs.<sup>1/</sup> Pianos were found in one-quarter of the homes, about one-third had some other musical instrument.

Kitchen floors were, in 84 per cent of the homes, covered with linoleum, although in many cases it needed replacing. Some built-in cupboards or work units were found in 45 per cent of the kitchens.

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<sup>1/</sup> Rockers were excluded.

**LIVING EXPENDITURES.**—The average total living expenditure for the 220 families studied in West Central Saskatchewan was \$1,400.<sup>1/</sup> Of this amount \$911 (65 per cent) was cash expenditure, while \$489 was supplied from the farm in the form of food, use of the farm house, and fuel.

Variation in cash living expenditure was considerable.<sup>2/</sup> The median for the group was \$825. The range was even greater than that observed for the families in West Central Alberta: excluding extreme values, 90 per cent of expenditures ranged from \$380 to \$1,640.

Distribution of Living Costs.—Expenditures were classified into the same groups of goods and services as those outlined in discussion of the West Central Alberta families.<sup>3/</sup> The percentage allocation of total living expenditure to these groups of goods and services is shown in Chart 6.

Provision of food accounted for nearly half of the total living expenditure. One-eighth was allotted to clothing, about the same proportion to rent, while one-tenth was spent for operation goods. After spending 5 per cent for health, and about the same amount for sundry personal goods, these families had left about 5 per cent for advancement goods, and 1 per cent of the total living expenditure for life insurance.

<sup>1/</sup> The survey year in this case was May 31, 1942 to May 31, 1943.

<sup>2/</sup> Deviation from the mean of \$911 was \$458. Compare this with the standard deviation for West Central Alberta which was \$426 from the mean of \$1,036.

<sup>3/</sup> See page 24.

Some further observations may be made in regard to the distribution of expenditure. Food costs were \$55 per month per family, or \$12 per month per person. Of this amount, a little over half was cash expenditure. Among food perquisites, milk and cream were valued on the average at \$100 for the year, butter at \$50 per family and eggs at \$68 per family.

These families used more coal than wood, hence only about one-eighth of the average of \$55 for fuel was furnished by the farm. The other large item in operation goods was expenditure for automobile—\$65 per family for the two-thirds having automobiles. <sup>1/</sup> Maids hired accounted for an average of \$82 per year for the 23 per cent of families employing domestic help.

The survey families averaged only \$18 per year for life insurance. About one-third of the families paid most of the life insurance reported; these averaged \$50 each.

Families of the West Central Saskatchewan sample averaged \$32 per year for church and charity, \$32 per year for educational expenditure, and \$14 for vacations, social activities, and fees for associations.

Variation in Expenditure Patterns with Increased Amounts Spent for Living.—Changes in expenditure patterns, as amounts spent for living increased, were very similar to those outlined for the families studied in West Central Alberta. From low to high expenditure groups, <sup>2/</sup> the proportion

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<sup>1/</sup> It has been noted that half of the current expense for automobile was charged to the farm business.

<sup>2/</sup> The same cash expenditure groups were used, that is low group consisted of families spending less than \$600 for living, the high of those spending more than \$1,200.

of the total living which was cash expenditure increased from 52 per cent to 71 per cent. Amounts spent for food, clothing, and operation goods increased from two to three-and one-half times, while expenditures for health, new furnishings, life insurance, personal goods, and advancement increased more than fivefold. Percentage of the cash expenditure allotted to food increased. Considerable increases were noted for health, and for advancement.

The climate and land conditions. The immigrants from the Western States were experienced in the farming practices most suited to prairie regions, and those who arrived from elsewhere learned from the southern immigrant and remained to help settle the more open land first.

In general, the land north and west of the prairie and beyond the tall grass and light open region known as the park belt, was covered with a heavy growth of scrub and trees which made it more difficult to improve for cultivation than the grass covered prairie. Farming, too, in these more northerly districts was subject to a greater frost hazard than in the south. All of which retarded settlement in the wooded areas. There was another climatic hazard, however, which affected crop production in the north more adversely than in the south, and which later proved a big factor in accelerating the settlement of the more northerly regions. This was drought.

The material for the study on the level of living in the pioneer areas of Northern Saskatchewan was assembled under the direction of Miss Helen K. Turnbull, who prepared a fairly detailed and comprehensive report entitled "A Level of Living Study of Families in the Pioneer Areas of Northern Saskatchewan". Economic Division, Dominion Department of Agriculture in co-operation with the University of Saskatchewan, 1922. Unpublished.

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COMPARISON OF PIONEER AND LONGER SETTLED AREAS

SETTLEMENT.—Agricultural settlement in the woodland regions of the Western Provinces occurred at a later date than in the park belt region and on the prairies. Geographically, the Canadian prairies are an extension of the American prairie west, and when occupation of the more fertile lands there was completed, land seekers settled across the border where there were like climatic and land conditions. The immigrants from the Western States were experienced in the farming practices most suited to prairie regions, and those who arrived from elsewhere learned from the southern immigrant and remained to help settle the more open land first.

In general, the land north and west of the prairies and beyond the tall grass and light aspen covered region known as the park belt, was covered with a heavy growth of scrub and of trees which made it more difficult to improve for cultivation than the grass covered prairie. Farming, too, in those more northerly districts was subject to a greater frost hazard than in the south. All of which retarded settlement in the woodland areas. There was another climatic hazard, however, which affected crop production in the south more adversely than in the north, and which later proved a big factor in accelerating the settlement of the more northerly regions. This was drouth.

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The settlement of the prairies took place during the first two decades of the present century, when moisture conditions on the whole were relatively favourable for crop production, and grain prices were comparatively high. Severe and prolonged drouth during the thirties discouraged many farmers on the prairies and made the woodland areas appear relatively more attractive. By this time, too, earlier maturing varieties of grain had been developed, the production of which could be adapted to the comparatively shorter frost-free period. During the early thirties there was a big migration of people from the southern plains into the woodland areas of the north and west. At the same time a number of people settled in the same areas who had been without work and on relief in the cities.

While a big influx of settlers into the more northerly woodland regions took place during the thirties, there were a few such regions fully settled before that time. Most of these were fostered by the church or a similar organization. During the twenties the railways sponsored immigration, and a number of settlements in the woodland areas were made near railways. Generally, however, until the late twenties there was far less country accessible by railway and good roads in the north than on the prairies and in the park belt.

**THE PIONEER AREA AND ITS FARMS.**—Compared to the West Central Alberta and West Central Saskatchewan areas which were discussed earlier, this whole region stretching across the northern part of the settled portion of Saskatchewan and Alberta is a pioneer farming part of the West today. Generally, it is being developed out of bush land. The log buildings and pole fences are common characteristics of the region.

The land varies in its topography from level and undulating plains to moderately rolling high land. The soil varies from a black through a degraded to a deeply leached grey wooded one. The soil texture varies from a sand to a clay.

The type of agriculture in the woodland areas varies, but generally is a mixed crop-live stock one. It is very much like that which prevails in the Red Deer-Wetaskiwin area previously discussed, except that it is in a more primitive stage of development.

In a few of the areas, the major source of income is cash grain--wheat being an important crop; in others chief dependence is placed on live stock; and in many, the two enterprises are given equal emphasis. A typical farm is one of a quarter-section in size with about one hundred acres under cultivation. Wheat, oats and barley are the principal crops grown, with a small field or patch in alfalfa, brome or timothy, for hay or pasture. There is about one-fifth to one-quarter of the cultivated land in fallow--fallowing being done to aid in keeping the land clean rather than to conserve moisture. On this typical farm there are from four to eight head of cattle, with possibly three or four cows milked. There is a brood sow or two, from which a litter or two of hogs is raised and finished for sale and home meat supply. Fifty to seventy-five hens is usually the extent of the poultry. Seldom are sheep found on these farms. In the last two years with the live stock-grain price ratio favouring live stock production the typical farm has carried twice the number of hogs indicated.

Horses are the chief source of farm power--the common unit being four to five head. On about one in four of the pioneer farms is there a tractor, and its operator usually augments his income by doing custom work for the neighbours. The divergence from this typical is, however, quite marked. There are a few farms, namely in the Aylsham-Carragana area and in the Meadow Lake area, which are almost a section<sup>in</sup> size, mostly under cultivation and with the enterprises to balance; and there are farms with scarcely more than a garden patch under cultivation. In a few cases these latter are the homes of part-time farmers employed in neighbouring lumber mills.

The fact that these areas were in a pioneer stage of development made them of particular interest for the study of levels of living of farm families.

**COMMUNICATIONS.**--The specific areas of Northern Saskatchewan covered in this study of farm family living were Preeceville, Bjorkdale-Carragana, and Aylsham-Armley districts in northeastern Saskatchewan, and the Meadow Lake, Loon Lake, and Goodsoil districts of northwestern Saskatchewan. Each of the settlements are fairly compact surrounding the town or towns by which they are known.

In northeastern Saskatchewan, branch railway lines pass through the towns mentioned. In northwestern Saskatchewan a railway line runs as far as Meadow Lake. Loon Lake is 43 miles from the end of the steel at Meadow Lake, and 32 miles from the terminal of another branch line at St. Walburg to the south. Beyond Loon Lake to the north, a distance of 52 miles, is Goodsoil.

During the last ten years well graded roads have been built south from Goodsoil and Meadow Lake to connect with the older towns of St. Walburg and North Battleford. There is a fairly well graded road connecting the settlements in northeastern Saskatchewan with the longer settled areas of Tisdale and Melfort. Generally in the parts of these newer settled areas which have been roughly 50 per cent cleared and brought under cultivation fairly satisfactory dry weather roads have been constructed. They are by no means as easily travelled as are the roads in either the West Central Saskatchewan or the West Central Alberta areas to which reference has been made.

Contrasts were noted also in regard to means of communication (Table 7). The pioneer farm families, who had farther to travel for many

Table 7.—Means of Communication in Three Farming Regions of Western Canada

	: West Central : : Alberta :	West Central : : Saskatchewan :	Northern : Saskatchewan
	%	%	%
Proportion of families having:			
Automobile	78	63	36
Telephone	49	71	4

essential services, had fewer automobiles, and almost no opportunities for communication by telephone.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES.—On the whole, the pioneer farming areas were as well provided with post offices, general stores, and churches as were the longer settled areas to which reference has been made. In other words, "every day needs" of the farm families were met almost equally well in these different types of areas. This was not true of the more

specialized services. Medical facilities, and high schools, while within reach of most families studied in West Central Alberta, were comparatively inaccessible for pioneer families, and in some cases for families in West Central Saskatchewan (Chart 7). Exceptions should be noted to this general statement on inaccessibility of pioneer families to specialized services, in the case of those rural people living near Preeceville, Meadow Lake, and Loon Lake where not only hospital services are offered but also the services of a resident doctor.

**HOUSING AND HOME CONVENIENCES.**—Housing in a pioneer area reflects the age and type of the settlement. Log houses, often hurriedly constructed to meet an urgent need, are likely to remain without major improvements until the farm capital has been very substantially increased.

Types of structure and finish of the houses differ markedly. While the most common type of house in Northern Saskatchewan was the log house, most common in West Central Saskatchewan was the unpainted, frame house. The type most common in West Central Alberta was painted frame (Table 8).

Table 8.—House Construction and Finish in Three Farming Regions of the Prairie Provinces

Type of House	: West Central : : Alberta :	: West Central : : Saskatchewan :	: Northern : Saskatchewan
	%	%	%
Brick	1	1	—
Stucco	13	4	2
Frame, painted	52	42	11
Frame, unpainted	33	52	32
Log <sup>1</sup>	2	1	55

<sup>1</sup>Includes a few houses which were part frame and part log.

Houses in the pioneer areas of Northern Saskatchewan were smaller than those of the other areas. Average number of rooms were as follows: Northern Saskatchewan 4.1, West Central Saskatchewan 5.4, and West Central Alberta 5.6. While about three-fourths of the homes in West Central Alberta and Saskatchewan provided one room or more per person, fewer than one-half of the homes in the more recently settled area met this standard.

Some further data on housing are given in Table 9. It is evident that while a considerable number of homes, even in the more mature settlements of Alberta and Saskatchewan were without built-in clothes closets, bathrooms, and a separate dining-room, a much greater number of homes in the more recently settled northern areas lacked these advantages.

Table 9.—Comparison of Some Material Advantages in Housing in Three Farming Regions of Prairie Provinces

	West Central: Alberta	West Central: Saskatchewan	Northern Saskatchewan
	%	%	%
Proportion of homes having:			
Clothes closets: one or more	73	65	39
Full basement, or part basement with improvements	57	54	33
Separate dining-room	45	41	14
Separate living-room	92	92	74
Bathroom	15	12	3

Homes of the pioneer families in Northern Saskatchewan were, in general, distinctly inferior in structure and repair to those in West Central Alberta. Those of West Central Saskatchewan were only a little better, in this respect than were those of Northern Saskatchewan. This state of condition in this area is no doubt due to the prolonged period

of drouth and depression of the thirties, the incidence of which fell more heavily on West Central Saskatchewan than in the other two areas. The ratings on structure and state of repair of farm houses in the three areas is given in the table which follows (Table 10).

Table 10.—Ratings on Structure and State of Repair of Farm Houses in Three Farming Regions of Prairie Provinces

Condition of House	West Central : Alberta	West Central : Saskatchewan	Northern Saskatchewan
	%	%	%
Good	30	11	10
Fair	52	47	45
Poor	18	42	45

The importance of household conveniences to the farm housewife and her family is obvious. Although in all these farming districts home conveniences were few, the families in West Central Alberta enjoyed a comparative advantage in this regard. Families in West Central Saskatchewan were in a mid-way position, while those in Northern Saskatchewan had almost no conveniences (Table 11). In the latter area, electric lighting, central heating, sewage disposal, and running water were almost non-existent. of farm operators averaged 40, and showed a range and distribution similar to that found in the other areas.

As would be expected in a country which has continued to encourage black settlement, in some districts certain nationalities predominate. The general picture for the whole northern region, however, was one of variation. Racial origins were many of the total sample, something over one-third were of Anglo-Saxon origin, one-seventh were Scandinavian,

Table 11.--Household Conveniences in Three Farming Regions of Western Canada

	West Central: Alberta	West Central: Saskatchewan	Northern Saskatchewan
	%	%	%
Proportion of homes having:			
Central heating	30	26	2
Electric lighting	15	8	1
Cistern	12	41 <sup>1</sup>	10
Sewage disposal (septic tank or equivalent)	10	3	1
Running water	10	4	3
Power washing machine	61	51	14
Sewing machine	91	92	82
Kitchen sink	39	38	12
Built-in kitchen cupboards	45	45	30
Linoleum on kitchen floor	90	84	47

<sup>1</sup>In one district of this area, cisterns were a necessity since well water was unusable. The proportion of families having cisterns was thus higher than it otherwise would have been.

#### FARM FAMILIES IN THE PIONEER AND LONGER SETTLED AREAS.--General

Characteristics.--Families were a little larger in the pioneer area than in the other two areas: the number of the family in the home averaging 4.8, while in West Central Saskatchewan it was 4.5 and in West Central Alberta 4.2. Age of farm operators averaged 46, and showed a range and distribution similar to that found in the other areas.

As would be expected in a country which has continued to encourage block settlement, in some districts certain nationalities predominate. The general picture for the whole northern region, however, was one of variation. Racial origins were many: of the total sample, something over one-third were of Anglo-Saxon origin, one-seventh were Scandinavian,

one-tenth French. A little more than half of the farm operators were born on this continent, about one-seventh were British born, and the others European born. It may be recalled that samples in West Central Alberta, and West Central Saskatchewan, showed 83 per cent and 76 per cent American-born.

The standard of formal education was somewhat lower in Northern Saskatchewan than in the other areas (Chart 8). Thus while 65 per cent of farm operators in West Central Alberta and 50 per cent of those in West Central Saskatchewan had Grade 8 or more, in Northern Saskatchewan only 40 per cent had formal schooling to the same extent.

Social and Cultural Activities.--Families of the pioneer area have been shown to be considerably less fortunate in the possession of material advantages than families of the longer settled farming regions. No such generalization, however, can be made concerning their social activities. Responses to questions on social participation indicated that there were not consistent differences between these groups of families. The variation in this regard was one from community to community, and family to family. While vacations were more common in the more prosperous areas, picnics and dances were more common in the pioneer settlements (Table 12). Church attendance was more general in the West Central Saskatchewan area, and there comparatively few social activities were reported. It was noted that in the latter area were a group of families (27 per cent of the total) for whom no social participation was reported. A number of these stated

Table 12.—Social Activities in Three Farming Regions of Western Canada

	West Central: Alberta	West Central: Saskatchewan	Northern Saskatchewan
	%	%	%
Church attendance: monthly or oftener	41	51	42
Some member of the family had a vacation	42	14	30
Dances: any member of the family attended	38	35	68
Picnics: any member of the family attended	51	40	78
Parties: any member of the family attended	55	8	55
Theatres: any member of the family attended	70	38	56

that they frowned on such activities. Theatre-going was rare in the area; the small community centres had no theatres. Membership in community organizations was more common in both the pioneer districts and the Alberta districts than in West Central Saskatchewan. An explanation for the less common occurrence of community organizations in the latter area may be found in the greater distances between farm homes on account of larger farms, with consequent fewer people, less frequent contact, and more isolation, than exists in the areas studied in Northern Saskatchewan and West Central Alberta.

The radio appeared to play an important part in the lives of farm families in all areas. The majority of families possessed radios, and most of those who had them reported their use each day (Table 13). Pianos, few in all districts, were found more commonly in the well settled West Central Alberta area. Other musical instruments, however, which included many less expensive types, were more common in the pioneer area.

Table 13.--Radios and Musical Instruments in Three Farming Regions of Western Canada

	West Central: Alberta	West Central: Saskatchewan	Northern Saskatchewan
	%	%	%
Proportion of homes having:			
Radio in the home	92	87	80
Radio used for daily news	88	86	73
Radio used for leisure daily	69	71	50
Piano in the home	54	26	8
Other musical instrument	38	37	53

Reading material of most types was more plentiful in the homes in West Central Alberta than in those of either of the other areas (Table 14). As might be expected, the time spent in reading was also greater.

Table 14.--Some Cultural Aspects of Homes in Three Farming Regions of Western Canada

	West Central: Alberta	West Central: Saskatchewan	Northern Saskatchewan
	%	%	%
Books in the home: 10 or more	32	31	18
Two or more magazines	61	38	25
Three or more weeklies	67	40	33
Daily newspaper	12	22	1
Operator spends 4 hours or more per week in reading	50	41	49
Wife spends 4 hours or more per week in reading	53	38	44

**FAMILY LIVING EXPENDITURES.**—The economic well-being of the farm family is reflected to a considerable extent by the amount and the type of its expenditures for living. The study of incomes is the study of a highly variable and an exceedingly complex factor. But the farm family, while unable to control many of the variations in income which result from climatic hazards and price fluctuations, can and does make every effort to maintain its standard of living. There is a certain level of expenditure, a certain group of goods and services, which every family considers essential. This level may be high or low, costly or inexpensive; variation is great. All families, however, have this in common: that they attempt to maintain their present standard, and to attain their desired or ideal standard of living. When income is too low to meet the family's minimum standard, savings or farm capital itself may be depleted. Similarly, although few families reach a standard they desire to make permanent, any surplus income after provision of such a standard would be converted into savings, or increased capital. Thus living expenditure is not only the objective expression of the standard of living, it is truly a measure of the "effective income" of the farm family.

**Three Planes of Family Living Expenditures.**—Levels of living, as measured by family living expenditures, differed markedly in the three farming regions under consideration. The pioneer farm families of Northern Saskatchewan spent only about one-half as much for living as did families in West Central Alberta (Table 15). Families of West Central

Saskatchewan were in a mid-way position in this, as in many other respects.<sup>1/</sup>

Table 15.—Living Expenditures in Three Farming Regions of Western Canada<sup>1</sup>

		West Central: Alberta	West Central: Saskatchewan	Northern Saskatchewan
Total living expenditure per family	\$	1,647	1,400	892
Cash living expenditure per family	\$	1,031	911	516
Cash living as percentage of total	%	63	65	58
Total living expenditure per person	\$	388	312	185
Cash living expenditure per person	\$	243	203	107
Average number in family	No.	4.25	4.49	4.82
Number of families	No.	202	220	200

<sup>1/</sup>The year of study was not identical for the three surveys, but in all cases was between May 31, 1941 and September 1, 1943.

As pioneer families had less money for cash living, farm furnished goods made up a greater proportion of the total value of living. This was in spite of comparatively lower actual values for farm perquisites (Table 16).

<sup>1/</sup> In West Central Saskatchewan, since the study was made during an unusually prosperous year living expenditures were probably higher than the long-time average. Nonetheless the mid-way position of the area is clearly evident.

Table 16.—Values of Farm Furnished Goods in Three Farming Regions of Western Canada

	West Central: Alberta	West Central: Saskatchewan	Northern Saskatchewan
	\$	\$	\$
Farm furnished food	307	317	277
Farm furnished fuel	33	8	24
Use of farm house (rent)	275	164	74
Non-cash living as percentage of total living	37%	35%	42%

Among the pioneer farm families, amounts spent for every group of goods and services were lower <sup>1/</sup> (Table 17). Substantial differences were noted in expenditures for food and clothing. For new furnishings and for advancement goods, pioneer families spent less than one-half of the amounts spent by families in West Central Alberta. Cash expenditure for operation goods was very small in Northern Saskatchewan, where there were few automobiles, almost no telephones, and little purchased fuel. Life insurance, rare in all areas, was almost non-existent in the pioneer area.

Table 17.—Cash Family Living Expenditures

	West Central: Alberta	West Central: Saskatchewan	Northern Saskatchewan
	\$	\$	\$
Food	364	244	211
Clothing	200	179	117
Operation goods	123	129	29
New furnishings	58	36	28
Health	84	77	44
Personal	68	51	35
Advancement	101	77	48
Life insurance	33	19	4
Total cash living	1,031	911	516

<sup>1/</sup> These groups of goods and services were defined in a previous section, page 24.

Direction of Spending Influenced by Relative Amounts.--Variations in amounts of cash expenditure were accompanied by differences in the direction of spending (Table 13). Where there is less money available for living, the necessities, particularly food, and also clothing, account for a greater proportion of the total expenditure. This trend was noted at various expenditure levels within each area. In comparison of areas it was even more clearly evident.

Table 13.--Distribution of Cash Living Expenditure in Three Farming Regions of Western Canada

	: West Central : : Alberta :	: West Central : : Saskatchewan :	: Northern : Saskatchewan :
	%	%	%
Food	35	38	41
Clothing	19	20	23
Operation goods	12	14	6
New furnishings	6	4	5
Health	8	8	8
Personal	7	6	7
Advancement	10	8	9
Life insurance	3	2	1
	100	100	100

In the earlier sections of this report, these three areas were characterized as representative of three income levels. The foregoing tables, which summarize family living expenditures in the areas for a one-year period, bear witness to such a characterization.

### SOME FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH VARIATIONS IN LEVELS OF LIVING

THE PROBLEM OF MEASUREMENT.—General appraisal of the levels of living in three rural areas has been made through an examination of the goods and services possessed by and available to farm families of these areas. Level of living is exceedingly complex, including not only innumerable goods and services, but also a consideration of their quality. In view of the importance of comparison of families, and of groups of families, to a fuller knowledge of farming regions, a summary measure of a number of aspects of level of living was considered essential. From a limited and clearly defined concept of "socio-economic status", such a measure was developed. Reference has already been made to the supplementary project in scale construction, and to the outline of method presented in another report.<sup>1/</sup> Brief mention of the general procedure may be made here.

Basic to the project was the objective definition of socio-economic status: the position that a family occupies with reference to the prevailing average standards of cultural possessions, material possessions, and participation in the group activities of the community. The "prevailing average" standards were considered to be those of the entire population, including all districts in which interviews were made. Thus a range of conditions was provided which was considered to represent most of Western Canadian farming regions. A group of items, 87 in number, which were believed to be indicators of socio-economic status, as defined above, were combined to form a tentative rating scale. Each of 673

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<sup>1/</sup> Edwards, F. M. and H. E. Elliott, op. cit.

<sup>1/</sup> families was rated according to this scale. One point of score was assigned for each item possessed; therefore initial scores might range from 0 to 87. The population was next divided into four different levels of score, or quartiles. Statistical tests were applied to each item, to gauge its utility in differentiating between these levels of status.<sup>2/</sup> The final scale was constructed of the 47 items shown to be most effective for this purpose. A list of these items, with percentage occurrence in the areas studied in this report appears in Appendix B. Scores hereafter referred to are based on a scale of these 47 items.<sup>3/</sup> The range in score was from 1 to 44.

The measure thus provided is independent of current farm income and expenditure. It represents rather the cumulative achievement of the family in attaining some of the possessions and opportunities sought by farm families as a group.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND FAMILY LIVING EXPENDITURES.--The association between socio-economic status and "effective income" or family living expenditure was examined further by a division of records into levels of status. For this purpose the entire sample was divided into four approx-

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<sup>1/</sup> The total number was 678: 622 records to which reference has been made, 3 others which were not used in the main report since data on living expenditures were incomplete, and 53 records, as already noted, which were obtained in a pioneer area of northeastern Alberta.

<sup>2/</sup> The analysis was thus based on an internal criterion; the assumption being that score on the initial scale of 87 items was the best available index to socio-economic status.

<sup>3/</sup> The scale is a tentative measure. The construction of a sociometric scale is complex. Many problems, particularly that of the representation of each aspect of socio-economic status, require further study.

Table 19.—Cash Living Expenditures by Score on the Socio-Economic Status Scale, for Three Farming Regions

Score Group	West Central Alberta				West Central Saskatchewan				Northern Saskatchewan			
	: Cash Living :		: Cash Living :		: Cash Living :		: Cash Living :		: Cash Living :		: Cash Living :	
	: Expenditures:		: Expenditures:		: Expenditures:		: Expenditures:		: Expenditures:		: Expenditures:	
	per : per :	in : of :	per : per :	in : of :	per : per :	in : of :	per : per :	in : of :	per : per :	in : of :	per : per :	in : of :
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.
Quartile 1 (low score)	803	172	5.25	12	552	95	5.88	23	446	87	5.13	113
Quartile 2	801	189	4.23	35	843	175	4.98	53	575	123	4.67	53
Quartile 3	950	218	4.36	69	866	215	4.40	76	673	157	4.32	24
Quartile 4 (high score)	1,206	300	4.02	86	1,161	271	5.09	63	611	177	3.56	10
All families	1,031	243	4.25	202	911	203	4.49	220	516	107	4.32	200

imately equal-size groups, or quartiles.<sup>1/</sup> Cash living expenditures were then examined within each group, both as average expenditure per family and average per person (Table 19). In every case families who scored higher for socio-economic status spent more per person for living. Generally, too, cash expenditure per family was larger, although in higher score groups families were somewhat smaller.

INCOME AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS.—Areal Differences.—The general association between income and living expenditure has been outlined in the comparison of the three regions under discussion. These regions were chosen as representative<sup>2/</sup> of three general income levels, and families of the areas differed accordingly in amounts spent for living. As might be expected, when socio-economic status was rated by the scale to which reference has been made, differences were observed between areas on this basis (Table 20).

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<sup>1/</sup> Quartile division was based on the total sample, that is, it included 53 records taken in northeastern Alberta 1943, and also 3 records not used in this report because data on living expenditures were incomplete. Actual division, on the basis of final score, resulted as follows:

Quartile 1, Scores 0 to 14 .....	182 records
Quartile 2, Scores 15 to 23 .....	160 records
Quartile 3, Scores 24 to 30 .....	174 records
Quartile 4, Scores 31 to 47 .....	162 records

<sup>2/</sup> Farm incomes in West Central Saskatchewan were abnormally high during the year of the study. Grain yields of 1942 were more than twice the long-time average. See footnote page .

Table 20.—Socio-Economic Status and Living Expenditures in Three Regions of the Prairie Provinces

	: Number : of : Families No.	: Score on the : Socio-Economic : Status Scale	: Cash Family : Living : Expenditures \$
West Central Alberta	202	28	1,081
West Central Saskatchewan	220	25	911
Northern Saskatchewan	200	15	516

Differences Within Areas.—When families of each area were divided into income groups, <sup>1/</sup> a consistent association between income and score was noted (Table 21). The spreads in both the cash family living expenses and in the socio-economic scores were wider in the older than in the

<sup>1/</sup> The measure used for separating the farms according to income was the family labour earnings. It is a farm management term defined as the returns to the operator and unpaid members of his family in addition to farm perquisites after interest has been deducted on capital. Information concerning the family labour earnings on the farms covered in Northern Saskatchewan and West Central Saskatchewan was obtained directly from the farm business records of the same farms taken for the same years. On about 15 per cent of farms covered in the Level of Living Study of the Red Deer-Wetaskiwin area farm accounts were kept for a dairy farm business survey conducted by the Dominion Economics Division in co-operation with the Province; information on family labour earnings was obtained directly from these accounts. An analysis of these accounts served as a basis for estimating the family labour incomes of the remaining farms covered in the Level of Living study of the same area, and from supplementary information obtained on these farms on inventories and sales of farm produce during the year of the study.

The ranges of family labour earnings indicating low, medium, and high income groups of Northern Saskatchewan were up to \$400, \$401 to \$700, and over \$700; of West Central Saskatchewan up to \$1,400, \$1,401 to \$2,400, and over \$2,400; and of West Central Alberta up to \$700, \$701 to \$1,100, and over \$1,100. It will be noted that the family labour earnings of West Central Saskatchewan for 1943 were considerably higher than in other areas. There have been very few years in the past in this district when the earnings reached these figures. Grain yields for the crop year 1942 were more than twice the long-time average of the district.

pioneer areas as between the different income groups.

Table 21.—Score on the Socio-Economic Status Scale by Income Groups for Three Farming Regions

West Central Alberta			West Central Saskatchewan			Northern Saskatchewan		
: Cash :	:	:	: Cash :	:	:	: Cash :	:	:
: Family :	:	:	: Family :	:	:	: Family :	:	:
: Living :	:	:	: Living :	:	:	: Living :	:	:
Income: Expen-: Average	:	:	Income: Expen-: Average	:	:	Income: Expen-: Average	:	:
Group : diture: Score	:	:	Group : diture: Score	:	:	Group : diture: Score	:	:
\$			\$			\$		
Low	826	25	Low	725	22	Low	443	13
Medium	921	27	Medium	897	25	Medium	499	14
High	1,225	32	High	1,145	30	High	593	17

Thus while it is evident that there is a positive relation between socio-economic status and income in all areas, it is more pronounced in those which have reached a greater degree of maturity.

It has been noted that the cash living expenditures of the farm families in Northern Saskatchewan averaged about one-half those of West Central Alberta, and less than two-thirds those of West Central Saskatchewan. This is to be expected in a comparison of any new settled area, with areas more mature, when opportunities for earning income are comparable. The need of funds with which to make additional land and building improvements, and to purchase equipment and stock during the pioneer stage compels the settler to stint on his living. He is willing to accept a lower level of living in anticipation of building up a business which will later sustain a higher level. However, it appears that the opportunities for earning income in the present set-up is not as favourable in the northern areas as in the others. The estimated income of the farmers in the pioneer areas

averaged only slightly more than one-half of those in either of the other two areas; and the farmers in those areas spent as large a proportion of their income on living as they did in the more mature areas. This describes the average. It is certain there were a number of farm businesses in Northern Saskatchewan which provided greater surpluses than is indicated for the average, to provide for the growth of the farm business with which to earn larger incomes and attain a higher socio-economic status.

In general, then, income and amount of the current living expenditure were related to socio-economic status. But was income an independent and exclusive factor? What of other factors sometimes thought to be associated with high or low socio-economic status? Family well-being depends on interaction of innumerable forces. The complex task of causal analysis is not attempted here. Certain of the more striking associations, however, which were noted between socio-economic status and such characteristics as education, birthplace, and size of family may be mentioned briefly. Such discussion may be of interest and, it is hoped, of some use in future studies as the analytical approach becomes possible.

**EDUCATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS.**—Education appeared to be consistently related to socio-economic status and living expenditures. The measure used was the weighted education, that is, the average number of years of schooling, of operator and homemaker.

1. A greater extent of formal schooling of operator and homemaker was associated with higher scores on the socio-economic status scale.
2. A greater extent of formal schooling was associated with higher living expenditures per person.

3. In general co-operators who reported more formal schooling had smaller families.

This association between education and level of living was evidently not entirely dependent on current income. Families of each district were divided into income groups, the measure used being the estimated family labour earnings for the current year.<sup>1/</sup> These are referred to as the high, medium, and low income groups for each district. Within each income group, families having more education had also higher scores for socio-economic status, and higher living expenditures (Table 22).

Table 22.—Socio-Economic Status Score and Living Expenditures by Education at Various Income Levels

		West Central		West Central		Northern	
		Alberta		Saskatchewan		Saskatchewan	
		: Cash		: Cash		: Cash	
		: Socio-:Living		: Socio-:Living		: Socio-:Living	
Income : Years of		: Economic: per		: Economic: per		: Economic: per	
Level	: Schooling <sup>1</sup>	: Status	: Person	: Status	: Person	: Status	: Person
	Yrs.		\$		\$		\$
Low	8.5 and less	22	203	21	169	13	96
	8.6 and more	29	210	25	179	17	122
Medium	8.5 and less	26	187	25	198	13	95
	8.6 and more	29	243	29	229	19	130
High	8.5 and less	29	268	28	228	15	113
	8.6 and more	34	295	32	256	20	153

<sup>1</sup>Average for operator and homemaker.

<sup>1/</sup> See footnote, page 69.

**BIRTHPLACE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS.**—An association appeared to exist between socio-economic status and birthplace, the native born farm families scoring higher than did foreign born (Table 23). The complexity of interrelationships in family well-being are particularly evident here. Birthplace was related, not only to socio-economic status but to education and to size of family.

Table 23.—Socio-Economic Status and Living Expenditures According to Birthplace of Operator by Income Groups

Income Level	Place of Birth <sup>1</sup>	West Central Alberta		West Central Saskatchewan		Northern Saskatchewan	
		Socio- Economic Status	Average Size of Family	Socio- Economic Status	Average Size of Family	Socio- Economic Status	Average Size of Family
		No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
Low	Native	26	4.0	23	4.1	14	4.3
	Foreign	21	4.0	19	5.4	8	4.6
Medium	Native	23	4.1	26	4.5	12	5.2
	Foreign	25	4.3	22	4.4	13	5.5
High	Native	32	4.3	30	4.7	18	4.4
	Foreign	31	4.6	31	4.8	13	5.2

<sup>1</sup>Those born in the British Isles excluded—numbers too few for group averages.

**SIZE OF FAMILY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS.**—The size of family appeared to have had some effect on the socio-economic rating of the home. Generally as the families increased in size the score declined; cash living costs per person decreased.

For each of the three areas the farm families were divided according to income and subdivided by size of family. While the decline in the socio-economic score is not regular, a trend toward a lower socio-economic rating occurs as the size of the family increases (Table 24).

Table 24.—Socio-Economic Status and Living Expenditures According to Size of Family by Income Groups

		West Central		West Central		Northern	
		Alberta		Saskatchewan		Saskatchewan	
		: Cash		: Cash		: Cash	
		: Socio-:Living		: Socio-:Living		: Socio-:Living	
Income	Size of	: Economic: per	: Economic: per	: Economic: per	: Economic: per	: Economic: per	: Economic: per
Level	Family	: Status :Person	: Status :Person	: Status :Person	: Status :Person	: Status :Person	: Status :Person
		\$		\$		\$	
Low	Less than 3	26	366	24	246	15	144
	3 to 3.9	26	278	23	249	15	139
	4 to 4.9	20	167	23	172	13	97
	5 to 6.9	26	181	20	144	12	73
	7 and over	25	126	16	98	10	77
Medium	Less than 3	31	370	28	375	15	170
	3 to 3.9	28	296	25	256	16	153
	4 to 4.9	27	212	26	206	10	92
	5 to 6.9	29	224	24	183	15	103
	7 and over	22	99	23	123	12	72
High	Less than 3	35	436	31	415	18	264
	3 to 3.9	31	392	30	294	16	147
	4 to 4.9	32	295	28	241	19	140
	5 to 6.9	31	233	33	284	18	125
	7 and over	29	204	27	152	12	77

As stated, the purpose of the foregoing presentation on the more significant factors associated with variations in levels of living is merely to indicate the general associations which apparently exist, and to point out the interrelationships.

## LEVEL OF LIVING SUPPLEMENT TO RECORDS OF PIONEER FARM BUSINESS

Date taken \_\_\_\_\_

ord No. \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Operator \_\_\_\_\_ P.O. \_\_\_\_\_

ation: District \_\_\_\_\_ Farm \_\_\_\_\_

## BUILDING AND FARMSTEAD RATING

Buildings

1. House--Construction \_\_\_\_\_ Roof \_\_\_\_\_ Storeys \_\_\_\_\_ Rooms \_\_\_\_\_ Heating System \_\_\_\_\_

Windows--Adequate in number \_\_\_\_\_ Size \_\_\_\_\_

Means of Artificial Lighting \_\_\_\_\_

Basement--Full \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_; Dirt \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_; Cisterns \_\_\_\_\_

Sewage Disposal \_\_\_\_\_ Running Water \_\_\_\_\_

Paint \_\_\_\_\_ Lightning Rods \_\_\_\_\_ Screen Door \_\_\_\_\_ Windows--Screen \_\_\_\_\_ Storm \_\_\_\_\_

Verandah--Open \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_; Furnished \_\_\_\_\_; Clothes Closets--No. \_\_\_\_\_ Where \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Floors \_\_\_\_\_ Walls \_\_\_\_\_

Notes re Comfort and Convenience of Home (Special note re arrangement of Work Units in kitchen) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Modern Conveniences and Labor-Saving Devices--Sewing Machine \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Washing Machine--Power \_\_\_\_\_ Hand \_\_\_\_\_; Bathroom \_\_\_\_\_ Fixtures \_\_\_\_\_

Cream Separator \_\_\_\_\_; Churn \_\_\_\_\_; Dumb Waiter \_\_\_\_\_

Built-in Cupboard \_\_\_\_\_ To Dining Room \_\_\_\_\_; Sink \_\_\_\_\_

Accessory Buildings--Ice House \_\_\_\_\_ Smoke House \_\_\_\_\_ Summer Kitchen \_\_\_\_\_

3. Type of Wall and Floor Finishes--

Room	Floors		Walls	Woodwork	Windows		
	Finish	Addl. Cover			Shades	Curtains	Drapes
Kitchen							
Dining Room							
Living Room							
Bathroom							
Bedrooms 1							
2							
3							
4							

4. Type of Furniture and Furnishings--

Room	Article	No.	Type	Orgl. Cost	Age	Condition	Present Value
Kitchen	Range						
	Table						
	Chairs						
	Work Table						
	Cabinet						
	Other						
Dining Room	Table						
	Chairs						
	Buffet						
	Tableware						
Living Room	Chesterfield						
	Lounge						
	Easy Chairs						
	Occasional Chairs						
	Bookcase						
	Books						
	Musical Instruments						
	Radio						
	Piano						
	Organ						
	Gramophone						
	Other						
	Reading Lamp						
	Desk						
	Occasional Table						
General Furnishings	Sewing Machine						
	Heater						
	Kitchen Equipment						
Bedrooms	Single Bed						
	Double Bed						
	Dressers						
	Washstands						
	Wardrobes						
	Bedding						

Farmstead

1. General--Cleared\_\_\_\_; Level\_\_\_\_; Windbreak\_\_\_\_; Hedge\_\_\_\_

Barnyard separated by fence from dooryard\_\_\_\_Type\_\_\_\_  
(fence)\_\_\_\_

2. Dooryard-Lawn\_\_\_\_Flower Garden\_\_\_\_

Vegetable Garden\_\_\_\_

Entrance Walk\_\_\_\_Other Buildings\_\_\_\_

3. Water Supply (for house)--Source\_\_\_\_Depth(of Wells)\_\_\_\_

Distance from House\_\_\_\_(feet) Pumping System\_\_\_\_

## LIVING EXPENSES

Quantity Value

Number Value

FoodPurchased--Groceries

Fruits &amp; Veg. \_\_\_\_\_

Meats \_\_\_\_\_

Produce \_\_\_\_\_

Produced---Milk

Cream \_\_\_\_\_

Butter \_\_\_\_\_

Eggs \_\_\_\_\_

Meat \_\_\_\_\_

Vegetables \_\_\_\_\_

Fruits \_\_\_\_\_

Clothing1. Work--(Men) Local Store

City \_\_\_\_\_

(Others) Mail Order \_\_\_\_\_

(Others) Local Store \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Order \_\_\_\_\_

2. Dress--(Men) Local Store

City \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Order \_\_\_\_\_

(Women) Local Store \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Order \_\_\_\_\_

(Children) Local Store \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Order \_\_\_\_\_

III FuelPurchased \_\_\_\_\_From Farm \_\_\_\_\_IV Light-- \_\_\_\_\_Maids Hired-- \_\_\_\_\_V Telephone-- \_\_\_\_\_VI Automobile-- \_\_\_\_\_VII New Furnishings-- \_\_\_\_\_Furniture \_\_\_\_\_Household Supplies-- \_\_\_\_\_

Sewing Machine \_\_\_\_\_

Washing Machine \_\_\_\_\_

Carpets, curtains, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

Bedding \_\_\_\_\_

Tableware \_\_\_\_\_

Kitchen equipment \_\_\_\_\_

IX Health

Doctor-Emergency Calls \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Exams \_\_\_\_\_

Dentist \_\_\_\_\_

Nurse \_\_\_\_\_

Occulist \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital \_\_\_\_\_

Medicine-Prop'y. Redmedies \_\_\_\_\_

Tonics(vit., min.) \_\_\_\_\_

Cemetery \_\_\_\_\_

X Life Insurance

Operator \_\_\_\_\_

Others \_\_\_\_\_

XI Personal

Sundry (tob., beer, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Social (dances, shows, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Vacations \_\_\_\_\_

Associations \_\_\_\_\_

XII Education

School Books \_\_\_\_\_

Fees \_\_\_\_\_

Away to School \_\_\_\_\_

Away to College \_\_\_\_\_

Extension courses \_\_\_\_\_

Music Lessons \_\_\_\_\_

Music \_\_\_\_\_

Books \_\_\_\_\_

Magazines \_\_\_\_\_

Newspapers--daily \_\_\_\_\_

Name: weekly \_\_\_\_\_

XIII Church and charity \_\_\_\_\_

## FOOD HABITS

Provision for Food

Area of: Potatoes \_\_\_\_\_ Garden \_\_\_\_\_ Orchard \_\_\_\_\_  
 Enough for Summer Potatoes \_\_\_\_\_ Vegetables \_\_\_\_\_ Fruit \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amount Grown: Enough for Winter, also \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fruits grown in Orchard \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bees kept: No. Hives \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of Honey Used \_\_\_\_\_

Storage of Food

Do you store vegetables and fruits other than canning? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, How? \_\_\_\_\_

Vegetables Canned--(a) Quarts of tomatoes \_\_\_\_\_  
 (b) Quarts of others \_\_\_\_\_  
 (c) Quarts of pickles \_\_\_\_\_  
 Quarts of Fruit Canned--Homegrown (tame) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wild \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tame (purchased) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Quantity of Jams and Jellies \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have own supply of meat for whole year? \_\_\_\_\_  
 (a) Amount canned \_\_\_\_\_ Types \_\_\_\_\_  
 (b) Amount smoked \_\_\_\_\_ Types \_\_\_\_\_  
 (c) Amount cured \_\_\_\_\_ Types \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity of eggs preserved for winter--(a) In water glass \_\_\_\_\_  
 (b) By other means \_\_\_\_\_

I Adequacy of Diet

1. Use of Milk--Do all members of family drink milk? \_\_\_\_\_ Quantity as bev. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you use one pint per person per day or more? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you use whole or skim milk? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you use additional cream each day? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Use of Meat--Is supply of fresh meat available all summer--from stores \_\_\_\_\_  
 from beef ring \_\_\_\_\_  
 Is supply of fresh meat available all winter--from stores \_\_\_\_\_  
 home-killed \_\_\_\_\_
3. Use of Eggs--Do all members of family eat eggs? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you use one egg per person per day or more? \_\_\_\_\_ Regularity \_\_\_\_\_
4. Use of Veg. & Fruit--Do you have two vegetables daily \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you have salad daily?--in summer \_\_\_\_\_ in winter \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you have fresh fruit daily--in summer \_\_\_\_\_ in winter \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you have tomatoes or citrus fruit daily \_\_\_\_\_ frequently \_\_\_\_\_
5. Use of Cereals--Do you serve whole-grain cereals for breakfast--cooked \_\_\_\_\_ prepared \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you use white bread--only \_\_\_\_\_ mostly \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you do all your own baking--bread \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you use any home-ground grains \_\_\_\_\_
6. Frequency of use of Desserts:--Fresh fruit \_\_\_\_\_ canned fruit \_\_\_\_\_  
 cereal milk puddings \_\_\_\_\_ custards \_\_\_\_\_ pie \_\_\_\_\_  
 ice-cream \_\_\_\_\_ jello \_\_\_\_\_ jam, jelly, honey \_\_\_\_\_  
 seldom have any \_\_\_\_\_

## LIVING HABITS

Home Life

1. Leisure--Is there a certain amount of leisure time allowed each day? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How used \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you spend Sunday--Working \_\_\_\_\_ Resting \_\_\_\_\_ Visiting \_\_\_\_\_  
 Entertaining \_\_\_\_\_ Sports \_\_\_\_\_ Church \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hobbies enjoyed by: husband \_\_\_\_\_ by wife \_\_\_\_\_
2. Radio---Used for: News \_\_\_\_\_ for farm information \_\_\_\_\_  
 Leisure--each day \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes \_\_\_\_\_
3. Reading--No. received of--Magazines \_\_\_\_\_ Newspapers--weekly \_\_\_\_\_ daily \_\_\_\_\_  
 Agricultural periodicals \_\_\_\_\_  
 Books: Number bought each year \_\_\_\_\_  
 Regular use of library--Travelling \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_ Public \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wheat Pool \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Time spent in reading per week: Husband \_\_\_\_\_ Wife \_\_\_\_\_
4. Music---What musical instruments do you possess? \_\_\_\_\_ Play \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do family members take music lessons \_\_\_\_\_ No. Taking \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument \_\_\_\_\_
5. Group entertainment enjoyed by Family:  
 Is radio a source of family entertainment--regularly \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes \_\_\_\_\_  
 Is music a means of family entertainment--regularly \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you play games--bridge \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Facilities for outdoor sports--ball games \_\_\_\_\_ rink \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_  
 How often do you have guests: Invited \_\_\_\_\_ for meals \_\_\_\_\_ evening \_\_\_\_\_  
 weekend \_\_\_\_\_ longer \_\_\_\_\_  
 Uninvited \_\_\_\_\_ for meals \_\_\_\_\_ evening \_\_\_\_\_  
 weekend \_\_\_\_\_ longer \_\_\_\_\_
6. General--Do you eat in the kitchen--always \_\_\_\_\_ usually \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes \_\_\_\_\_  
 Does housewife do outside work--gardening \_\_\_\_\_ milking \_\_\_\_\_ poultry \_\_\_\_\_  
 other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do hired men share farm home--for sleeping \_\_\_\_\_ for eating \_\_\_\_\_
7. Health---Do you have--periodic medical exams \_\_\_\_\_ periodic dental exams \_\_\_\_\_  
 Members of family wearing eye glasses \_\_\_\_\_ where procured \_\_\_\_\_  
 Members of family needing attention to eyes \_\_\_\_\_  
 Time lost on account of illness last year--husband \_\_\_\_\_ wife \_\_\_\_\_  
 History of serious illnesses in family \_\_\_\_\_  
 General health rating of family \_\_\_\_\_
8. Education--Facilities for getting children to--grade school \_\_\_\_\_ high school \_\_\_\_\_  
 Correspondence courses used \_\_\_\_\_
9. Time away from farm--Do you visit friends--for meals: once a week \_\_\_\_\_ once a month \_\_\_\_\_  
 on holidays \_\_\_\_\_ seldom \_\_\_\_\_  
 for evenings: once a week \_\_\_\_\_ once a month \_\_\_\_\_  
 on holidays \_\_\_\_\_ seldom \_\_\_\_\_
- Vacations and Important Trips
- | Who travelled? | Where? | Travelled by | Time away | Purpose | Cost |
|----------------|--------|--------------|-----------|---------|------|
|                |        |              |           |         |      |
|                |        |              |           |         |      |
|                |        |              |           |         |      |
|                |        |              |           |         |      |
- Does family move to town for winter \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Enumerator

# SOCIAL ANALYSIS

## Community Facilities:

	Miles To		Miles To		Miles To
Shipping Point _____		Dentist _____		Community Hall _____	
Post Office _____		Oculist _____		Theatre _____	
General Store _____				Farmers' Locals _____	
Free Good Clothes _____		School/grade _____		City _____	
Tor _____		high _____		Athletic Grounds _____	
Hospital _____		Church _____		Swimming Pool or Lake _____	

## Social Participation

1. Social Interests:	No. in family attending	Times per year	Cost
Church _____	_____	_____	_____
Fairs _____	_____	_____	_____
Dances _____	_____	_____	_____
Picnics _____	_____	_____	_____
Parties _____	_____	_____	_____
Theatres _____	_____	_____	_____
Athletics _____	_____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____	_____

## 2. Community Interests--(a) Societies, Clubs and Lodges

Name of Organization No. fam. memb. No. yrs. memb. Times Postitions Held Fees

## (b) Civic Offices Held

## STATE OF SATISFACTION AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

Rating	Satisfied		Equal		Dissatisfied	
	Entirely	Mostly			Mostly	Entirely
Aspect of Living	Oper. Wife	Oper. Wife	Oper. Wife	Oper. Wife	Op. Wife	Op. Wife
Farm and Farming:						
Present Farm _____						
Farming as Income Source _____						
Farming as a way of life _____						
Rural Life:						
Neighborhood _____						
Neighbors _____						
Community Services _____						
Social--recreational facilities _____						
Home Life:						
Household Conveniences _____						
Present Family Life _____						
Health:						
Head of family _____						
Wife _____						
Children _____						
Way of life in general: (every-thing considered) _____						

## Reasons for Dissatisfaction:

Background of city or town life--op. \_\_\_\_\_ wife \_\_\_\_\_ : Desire to live there--op. \_\_\_\_\_ wife \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ambitions in other line of work--op. \_\_\_\_\_ wife \_\_\_\_\_ : Isolation & Loneliness--op. \_\_\_\_\_ wife \_\_\_\_\_  
 Lack of comforts and conveniences in home--operator \_\_\_\_\_ wife \_\_\_\_\_





